ROTHBARD-ROCKWELL REPORT

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DEATH: TWO KINDS

LLEWELLYN H. ROCKWELL, JR.

A certion kind of death makes good politics. Another kind is completely irrelevant to the political elite. The shooting of the Capitol Hill police illustrates the difference.

The victims were not just working stiffs in the wrong place at the wrong time. They "consecrated" the Capitol building "to freedom" (Clinton). They were "ministers of our democracy,...watchmen who guarded not just a building, but an ideal" (Gore).

Their deaths brought "the spirit of freedom" into the Capitol (Lott). Their sacrifice in "this sacred space" was "a real building block of freedom" (Gingrich). Thus, their bodies were displayed in the Rotunda of the Capitol and they were buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Private security guards are shot all the time, and if you want to put an ideological spin on tragedy, you can say they die in defense of liberty and property. But Congress doesn't trouble itself with tributes to these men. For that matter, the murder of innocents across America is a common occurrence, but even the most brutal hardly make it out of the local paper.

Meanwhile, the press and the FBI did their best to portray the gun-wielding perpetrator as an "anti-government activist," just as the Oklahoma bombers were supposed to typify anyone who doubts the merits of federal arson at the Branch Davidian Church.

This is the use of death as a political tool. In times when government fears the people, and suspects that many Americans have fantasized about blasting their way through a federal building, the power elite wants to send a message.

The message is this: if a citizen dares lay a finger on anyone connected with the governing elite—and that includes private citizens specially privileged by law—he will be prosecuted by the feds to the full extent of the law. As for his victims, no effort will be spared to turn them into martyrs for truth, justice, and the American way.

Private death, public death. The difference is illustrated in the treatment of Waco and Oklahoma. At Waco, the feds who were killed in the raid were given a monument, and called martyrs for freedom. The few surviving Branch Davidians were jailed. David Koresh was not a "minister of democracy," but a child abuser, a stockpiler, and a monster (though it's clear he just wanted to be left alone).

The parallel mass murder that took place in Oklahoma was given exactly the opposite spin. This time, the attacker was the monster who himself should be killed, and the victims were paid tribute in a manner similar to the Capitol Hill policemen.

Only public death, the death of those connected at some level to the federal apparatus, is called a tragedy. It is mandatory that you mourn. It is mandatory that you hate the murderer. Private death, the death of anyone unconnected with the feds or a direct victim of the feds, is to be disregarded.

Look at the list of penalties for which the feds impose capital punishment. Nearly every one involves an attack on a federal official. When they die, they are martyrs to freedom. When others die, they are statistics.

Every total state uses violence to its own ends, condemning it when used against the state and its interests, praising it when used in defense of the state, calling it patriotism when used against foreign peoples. But let's not pretend that the tactics of the political class have anything to do with reverence for the sanctity of life. RRR

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INTELLIGENCE BRIEFING

No whistling it either: "GOP delegates sizing up New York for their next convention made a terrible impression at the Monkey Bar last Friday night," reports the *New York Post* (July 29, 1998). "I was shocked and dismayed when two southern delegates from Florida and Georgia requested that I play 'Dixie,'" said society songster Michael Garin, who politely declined.

Tomb of the Knowns: In all the publicity about the reburial of the Vietnam vet who had been in the Tomb of the Unknowns (formerly, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier), one ingredient is missing: the fact that the Reagan administration had a set of known bones reclassified as unknown so Reagan could make one of his choked up speeches in 1984, and salute the tomb. It didn't have the disastrous effect of his wanting to salute a heroine-teacher in space, in his state of the union message, leading to the premature launch of the Challenger. But it's a great peek into the uses the State makes of patriotism. Denying a family the remains of their dead son counted for nothing. There's only been one good effect to the scandal: the demystifying of one of the symbols that attempted to give a religious significance to the government.

Not only political groupies attended the worshipful wake for the dead policemen. "Tourists" also gathered, and the *New York Times* was there to record their political inclinations. "This is the nation's Capitol," said Laurie Waller, 33. "This building means freedom for the rest of us. It means the United States, and these men were guarding it." Trisha Colella, a 45-year-old Boston homemaker, brought her daughter to "show her this is the U.S. Government and we don't stop." "Maybe the right to bear arms should be for law enforcement, and not civilians," said 45-year-old Angela Frazier, noting that as a teenager she and her friends would "make out" on Capitol grounds and and "the officers were always nice and helpful."

Has a summer ever been dominated by so much weather news? How many times must we hear that it is hot in Texas? The news began to sound like Nightline during the Iran hostage "crisis." "Day 23: Triple-Digit Heat in Texas." Of course, the whole melodrama was really about drumming up public fits about phony "global warming." A general rule: never trust the motives of media types who make victims out of farmers and ranchers. Like Marx, the media think these professions are idiotic. In the eighties, the farm foreclosure crisis was really an attempt to show that not all people in need of welfare are from the inner city.

Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan* ends with statist and globalist bluster, but the lasting impression is precisely the one that has reviewers like Richard Grenier in fits. It shows this century's "good" war as it truly was, not a Manichaean struggle between good and evil, but thousands of individuals fighting for their individual lives in the midst of government-sanctioned mass murder. Spielberg is usually up to some mischief in his films (e.g. *ET* as a metaphor for society's marginalized), but this one may inoculate another generation against war, thereby contributing to the resistance movement. It's a cultural landmark worth celebrating.

The Congress voted overwhelmingly to ban gambling on the internet, but what about state lotteries, which are both approved and encouraged by the feds? They are pure scams. The larger the prize money, the worse the odds. The odds are potentially even worse than the prospect that your vote will make a difference in an election, just to mention another redistributionist scam. But try to find out about the odds of winning a government lottery. If a private casino operated this kind of racket, it would be shut down under the fraud statutes. As for internet gambling, Congress can legislate all it wants. By now, it's the oldest, established, permanent floating crap game in the world.

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The National Taxpayers Union was once a venerable non-partisan organization that ranked politicians based on whether they voted for or against spending. NTU once drove the Republicans nuts because it made no distinction between dollars going to HUD or to NASA. Alas, nothing good in politics lasts forever, and this year, NTU has sold out to the GOP leadership. The clue was that Ron Paul barely scored in the top ten, while big spending Gingrich came in at number 4. It turns out that NTU put vast weight on whether a pol voted for the phoney baloney budget pact of 1997, the one that expanded welfare in the name of balancing the budget. Ron said no way, and down the list he tumbled. But it's NTU that's hurt, not Ron.

As for good rankings of voting records, the new "Taxpayers for Common Sense" is what NTU used to be: purely non-partisan, tallying votes on welfare for the poor as well as for rich industrialists. And guess where Ron came in: #1! Of course. But the GOP leadership immediately went nuts when they saw their favored members tumble down the list. A GOP press release announced to the public, implausibly, that this is a "leftist environmentalist" group that can't be trusted. Talk about losing credibility.

It's official: everyone in Washington agrees that Wall Street needs to help bail out the Social Security system and that the budget surplus should go to this end. That is to say, the stock market should enjoy socialist guarantees against failure and taxpayers should get none of their money back. The last time everyone in Washington agreed, it was on the glories of fast track. And we know what happened to that one. Give it some time and the "privatization" of Social Security will be exposed for the tax scam it truly is.

Beltway types are at it again, claiming that increases in welfare and state power are actually victories for liberty. For instance: the Wisconsin supreme court decision to allow government aid to religious schools. A victory for choice, says the Institute for Justice. In fact, schools that accept the money must allow "random admissions," like, well, the public schools. And every student must be allowed to "opt out" of religious discussion. IJ says this is fine, because it accords with the first amendment requirement that aid-receiving schools neither "favor nor disfavor religion." Hello? Shouldn't we think twice before destroying what's left of religious schools, not to mention handing out more welfare?

Don't let a day pass without celebrating, even in the smallest ways, the downfall of another president and, more importantly, the crumbling of the presidency itself. That's not to say the Prez will be impeached or even that his poll numbers (for whatever they are worth) are going to plummet. What's dying is the myth of the presidency, invented by Lincoln, codified by Wilson, glorified by Roosevelt, and practiced ever since, that the presidency is the moral center of the nation, the embodiment of the general will. The truth is the presidency is, like the state itself, a fiction by which a tiny and immoral minority exercise unjust rule over the largely moral majority.

"When the time comes for the 'inquisition of blood,' who shall answer for these things? You have read the tidings from the Crimea; you have, perhaps, shuddered at the slaughter; you remember the terrific picture—I speak not of the battle, and the charge, and the tumultuous excitement of the conflict, but of the field after the battle—the Russians in their frenzy or their terror, shooting Englishmen who would have offered them water to quench their agony of thirst; Englishmen, in crowds, rifling the pockets of the men they had slain or wounded, taking their few shillings or rubles, and discovering among the plunder of the stiffening corpses images of the 'Virgin and Child.' You have read this, and your imagination has followed the fearful details. This is war, every crime which human nature can commit or imagine, every horror it can perpetrate or suffer; and this it is which our Christian Government recklessly plunges into, and which so many of our countrymen at this moment think it patriotic to applaud!"—classical liberal John Bright, October 29, 1854

Social democracy has built bigger governments than even the Nazis could. "In 1940, when the Wehrmacht conquered and occupied most of continental Europe," writes Nicholas Eberstadt in *Job and Capital* (Fall 1997), "the German state's expenditures amounted to roughly 48 percent of gross national product (GNP). Forty years later, defense expenditures amounted to less than 3 percent of national output in West Germany, but general government expenditures were estimated at slightly over 49 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). (In Austria, which was part of the German Reich during the course of the war, defense spending amounted to barely 1 percent of GDP in the 1980s, yet general government outlays consistently exceeded 50 percent of national output throughout that decade.) Indeed, available figures suggest that quite a few peaceable and open Western societies—Belgium and the Netherlands among them—entrusted a greater share of national output to their governments in the 1980s than Hitler's war state had commanded in 1941, the year in which it invaded the Soviet Union." RRR

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THE CHINA HATERS

JUSTIN RAIMONDO

The burst of good old fashioned "isolationism" on the right that followed the implosion of Communism seems to have sputtered to a halt. From Pat Buchanan to Gary Bauer to the congressional Republican leadership, just about every political leader and ideologue of a conservative hue has joined a concerted campaign to demonize China. A grand coalition that spans the spectrum, from the AFL-CIO to Gary Bauer–putting Buchanan on the same side of the barricades as Richard Gere–is beating the drums for at least cold war with China.

The labor unions want a trade war, as does Buchanan; the neoconservatives are naturally in favor of any war, so long as it serves their vision of "world hegemony," as *Weekly Standard* editor Bill Kristol likes to put it.

Some Religious Right leaders, notably Bauer, have signed on to the war against "Red China," alleging anti-Christian persecution. The Hollywood crowd, steeped in New Age mysticism and enamored of Tibetan Buddhism, is waging a war of images, with Sinophobic movies such as "Kundun." Bootlegged videos of Hollywood have flooded the Chinese market, and the movie moguls are miffed.

The Sinophobes almost never refer to China as simply China, but instead raise the specter of Red China, or Communist China. Of course, it was never called this during the halcyon days of the Cold War, during the era of Mao Tsetung, when China was in the throes of the Cultural Revolution–a mass ideological exorcism in which "bourgeois capitalist-roaders" within the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) were sent to reeducation camps, and peasants were forced to live in agricultural communes, in which they worked, ate, and slept together like a vast hive of worker bees.

For Mao had not only broken with the Kremlin, but deemed the Soviet "social imperialists" far more dangerous than the U.S. Nixon's trip to China signaled the beginning of a wide-ranging strategic and military alliance between the two nations. While a very few conservatives rallied around their old ally, Taiwan, most proclaimed Nixonian diplomacy a stroke of genius, and from that moment on no more was heard about human rights violations.

A wave of reform has washed the redness out of China so thoroughly that it is, today, not even a barely discernible pink.

After Nixon raised his glass in salute to the People's Republic, "Red" China dropped entirely out of the conservative lexicon. The great problem in reviving it is that a wave of reform has washed the redness out of China so thoroughly that it is, today, not even a barely discernible pink.

Since the death of Mao, in 1979, and the ascension of Deng Xiaoping, China has shed Marxist orthodoxy in all but the formal sense. In fact, the Chinese Communist Party is presiding over the largest-scale destatization process ever attempted: in "constructing socialism with Chinese characteristics," as they put it, the heirs of Mao and the Long March are systematically dismantling the economic foundations of socialism.

Selling off state industries, not only allowing but actively soliciting foreign investment, opening up stock exchanges, privatizing land, ending price and allocation controls, cutting back on the military, cutting taxes, privatizing public housing, allowing private schools, encouraging private enterprises of all sorts and sizes–these and a host of other radical measures have effectively abolished the economic dictatorship of the Party and the State. The dour spirit of Maoist egalitarianism, which exhorted China to "put politics in command," has given way to a new form of "socialism" summed up by Deng in a famous maxim: "To get rich is glorious!"

While Chinese Marxist theoreticians insist on referring to their system as "market socialism," it may be less socialist than the economies of Europe and the United States. In many respects, the burgeoning Chinese private sector is far less regulated than in the West. China has no "civil rights" laws, no Chinese With Disabilities Act, no affirmative action. Western commentators of the left-liberal persuasion bemoan the

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lack of social welfare measures, such as workman's compensation, and demand that Chinese be given the alleged right to organize unions.

At the end of Deng Xiaoping's life, in the final throes of his struggle against the remaining orthodox Maoists, the aging leader took the stump and made his case to the Chinese people. Traveling throughout South China, he argued for more rapid privatization and the unleashing of market forces. As Orville Schell puts it in his book, *The Mandate of Heaven*, "Deng's [Southern tour] had rammed Chinese society into reverse gear, stampeding the country into a form of unregulated capitalism that made the U.S. and Europe seem almost socialist by comparison."

With the standard of living and growth rates rapidly rising, ordinary Chinese have never been better off. But that does not satisfy the "human rights" crowd: far from it. China may be taking the capitalist road, they carp, but it is still a long way from achieving "democracy." This obsession with capital-d Democracy overshadowed Clinton's recent trip to China, and so skewed the focus of the American media, and, ultimately, the President himself, that the main subject of public discussion was not the dramatic achievements of the post-Mao destatization, in which a billion people lifted themselves up out of serfdom. Instead, the President engaged in an hour-long colloquy with Chinese premier Jiang Zemin, on the 1989 Tiananmen Square incident, in which a few hundred rioters bent on self-immolation achieved their stated ends.

The Tiananmen Square "massacre" is an incident so wrapped up in mythology, most of it generated by Western journalists and their professional "dissident" friends, that it is nearly impossible for any revisionist analysis to be given a hearing. The world saw the Goddess of Democracy, the bright banners and youthful idealism of the protesters, a giant rock-concert held under a gargantuan portrait of Chairman Mao. Indelibly etched on the popular mind is the image of a lone man standing in the path of an oncoming tank. The tank moves to the left, and then to the right, in an effort to avoid flattening him. This sequence of events could serve as a kind of shorthand for the events leading up to the infamous incident.

Tiananmen Square: where a few hundred rioters bent on self-immolation achieved their stated ends.

Ensconced in the Square for weeks on end, the students were at first hailed by the radical reform wing of the CCP and even some of the more orthodox, as the harbingers of a new spirit of "socialist democracy." Hu Qili, the party chieftain in charge of press and propaganda at the time, was in sympathy with the students' democratic demands, and gave the go-ahead to the media to open up and begin to report what was happening in the Square. The students were duly rewarded with a front-page photo and adulatory news story in the May 5 issue of the official *People's Daily*. On May 18, the *Daily* pushed Gorbachev's visit to a small item below the fold and ran six front-page stories on the student protest. Headlines blared: "One Million From All Walks of Life Demonstrate in Support of Hunger-Striking Students"; "Save the Students! Save the Children!" Other newspapers in different areas of the country joined the chorus.

American commentators breathlessly point to the fact that the Jiang Zemin-Clinton debate on the meaning of Tiananmen was broadcast live over the state-controlled television network. Their astonishment is equaled only by their ignorance: the Chinese media has been relatively open for some time. In fact, since the Communist regime was installed in 1949, the Chinese media has been a battleground in the ceaseless factional conflicts within the Communist Party, and, to a certain extent, in the country at large. Mao's Hundred Flowers campaign, followed by vicious repression, made ordinary Chinese wary of such opening up. The Cultural Revolution, a paroxysm of violence and collective madness, was ushered in by an article in the Chinese media, and orchestrated by an extensive press and television campaign that targeted the Communist Party itself as the seedbed of capitalism reborn.

Before the Tiananmen Square crackdown, the media were in the hands of reformers and was bold enough to broadcast party chieftain Zhao Ziyang's indiscreet remarks to Gorbachev, during the latter's visit, that Deng, although without any official post, was really at the helm. In

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1989, at the height of the turmoil, the top leadership of the CCP met with the student rebels: the entire proceedings were broadcast nationwide by CCTV. It is as if, during the Chicago Democratic convention in 1968, Mayor Daley and U.S. government officials had agreed to negotiate with Mark Rudd, Bernadine Dohrn, and Abbie Hoffman.

In understanding the politics and style of the Tiananmen Square protesters, the New Left analogy is useful. For these were leftists, in a Chinese context, in their ideology as well as in their provocative style. From the very beginning, the student rebels marched into the Square singing the "Internationale," and toting portraits of Mao. According to Lee Feigon's pro-student protester account of "The Meaning of Tiananmen," the leaders of a prominent student group "hung big pictures of Mao Zedong in the tents they pitched on the square. They talked openly and boldly about the good old days of the Cultural Revolution. Mao, they felt, had the right ideas, although he sometimes used wrong tactics. Now they were determined to use what they considered the right ones." [p. 211]

Those tactics were as confrontational as any employed by any band of Yippies that ever marched through the streets of American cities in the sixties. The leadership of the student movement was fractious, and rarely spoke in a single voice, but the elected "Supreme Commander" of the Tiananmen Square encampment, Chai Lin, carried much moral authority, and it was largely through her influence that thousands of students failed to evacuate the Square even after word had reached them (reportedly from Deng Xiaoping's son, Deng Pufang) that the tanks were rolling.

That Chai Lin welcomed death, and that the actions of her and her hardcore followers amounted to a mass suicide, is clearly expressed by the Supreme Commander herself in an interview conducted in late May, just before the crackdown: "Some fellow students asked me what our plans are, what our demands will be in the future. This made me feel sick at heart; I started out to tell them that what we were waiting for was actually the spilling of blood, for only when the government descends to the depths of depravity and decides to deal with us by slaughtering us, only when rivers of blood flow in the Square, will the eyes of our country's people truly be opened." [Cited in Han Minzhu, ed., *Cries for Democracy: Writings and Speeches from the 1989 Chinese Democracy Movement* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1990), p. 327]

The student rebels marched into the Square singing the "Internationale," and toting portraits of Mao.

Even as more reasonable student leaders, like Wu'er Kaxi, argued that the students, having made their point, should withdraw from the square and live to fight another day, Chai Lin commanded her followers to stay and wait for martyrdom. Already embarked on a hunger strike that had weakened and even completely debilitated many students, they passively obeyed their fanatical Commander. In style and spirit, Tiananmen Square is closer to Jonestown than to a crusade for freedom. Like the American New Left of the sixties, the Chinese New Left that reached its flaming apogee in Tiananmen Square employed radically self-dramatizing means to achieve egalitarian and revolutionary ends. They, too, held high the banner of Chairman Mao; like the Weathermen faction of SDS, Chai Lin and her hardcore supporters not only expected repression but openly hoped that their actions would provoke it.

As Eric Margolis, foreign affairs editor of the *Toronto Sun*, put it, the Tiananmen Square "massacre has become a cause celebre among fashionable leftists and literati, who have never forgiven China's rulers for abandoning socialism." This reaction to the policies of Deng Xiaoping and his successors was not limited to the West, but was reflected not only in the Maoist sympathies of some Chinese students, but in the broad demands put forward by the student movement.

At the height of the reforms, with government subsidies to students cut to the bone, intellectuals saw their incomes remain stagnant or even decrease at a time when relatively uneducated peasants were going into business and following Deng's maxim to get gloriously rich. While insisting on their right to march, the students also demanded "more money for education and higher pay for intellectuals." [Feigon,

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p. 135] A 1988 survey "showed that the average college graduate earned $9 per month less than those who had not gone to college," and this energized much of the students' revolutionary fervor. What Ludwig von Mises called "the anti-capitalistic mentality," so endemic among intellectuals, who feel underappreciated and undervalued by the market economy, was clearly at work here.

Another underreported aspect of the student movement that led to the Tiananmen protest was the politically incorrect racial aspect: while Chinese students were forced to live 6 or 8 to a room, foreign students sponsored by the Chinese government, primarily from Africa, were given relatively luxurious quarters and good food, all gratis. Anti-African protests broke out in the city of Hehai, ending in violence. Shouting anti-black slogans the student militants rampaged through the Africans' dormitories, roughed up all foreigners, and besieged local authorities; campus protests soon spread to Shanghai, Beijing, and elsewhere. On April 19, militants from the Tiananmen Square encampment marched on the living quarters of the top Party leaders at the famous Zhongnanhai compound. Screaming insults at Deng, they also yelled "Kill the foreigners!"

As Lee Feigon, an eyewitness, relates: "The police, in fact, seemed remarkably tolerant, appearing unflustered by the constant jeering and screaming. Many who watched doubted that the American Secret Service would have reacted so genially if a similar mob were battering on the gates of the White House in the middle of the night. This was carried to an extreme at about 2:30 a.m. when the police tried to clear the crowd and some of them were pushed back onto a cluster of fallen bicycles. One tough picked up one of the bikes and smashed it over the head of one of the police. He was not arrested." [Ibid., p. 139]

At the height of the Cultural Revolution, a million Red Guards had answered Chairman Mao's summons to assemble in Tiananmen Square and "make revolution": the result had been a decade of turmoil and a Great Leap Backward in terms of economic development. By the time Mao finally died, virtually all institutions of higher learning had been shut down, and in large parts of the country industrial production nearly ground to a halt; agriculture was also seriously hampered. China could barely feed her starving millions.

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Deng personally suffered during this ultra-leftist interregnum: not only was he stripped of his positions and banished to the countryside, where he served in a work brigade, but he was denounced as "China's number-two capitalist-roader" (Zhou Enlai being Number One). His son, Deng Pufang, was attacked by a mob of frenzied Red Guards and thrown out of a window at Beijing University: he was paralyzed from the waist down. The Gang of Four, led by Madame Mao, the Chairman's depraved and vicious wife, directed a reign of terror at Deng and many other capitalist-roaders in the CCP.

All material incentives were abolished, and instead, central planners counted on ideological zeal to boost industrial production. Ruthless egalitarianism was enforced, and everyone in a position of authority or tainted by expertise was ruthlessly "criticized" until they confessed in public to being capitalist-roaders. Thousands of years of Chinese culture were expunged, as Red Guards smashed priceless artwork and looted ancient Buddhist monasteries, in a relentless campaign against the "ghosts and monsters of the feudal past." Madame Mao, in her youth a movie actress of minor repute, took a special interest in revolutionizing culture. The traditional Chinese opera was banned, as a reactionary relic, and replaced by a series of revolutionary operas.

As the orgy of destruction reached its climax, Nixon chose to make his rapprochement with the Beijing regime, cementing an alliance against the Soviet Union signaled by his famous trip to the People's Republic. While Clinton was regaled with displays of traditional Chinese culture at its most elaborate, Nixon's entertainment was confined to a performance of "The Red Detachment of Women," one of Madame Mao's revolutionary ballets.

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As British journalist James Pringle recalled, "Mao's sour-faced wife...hosted Nixon at a rather grubby theater for the performance, and he smiled as she told him that the face on a target that the people's heroes were firing at was that of Chiang Kai-shek," the Nationalist Chinese dictator of Taiwan, who still claimed suzerainty over all China–and who, up until that moment, had been a staunch U.S. ally.

Mao used the Red Guards to destroy his enemies in the Party, but in the end, he balked at turning over power to his wife. As the country descended into chaos, Mao pulled back: the Red Guards were told to return to their universities and workplaces. The army was called in to quell the Maoist mobs, and the Cultural Revolution Group that ran the Party's propaganda machine was chastened by the Chairman if not yet silenced.

With the ultra-leftists reined in, Mao called many of the purged "rightists" back into government service, Deng among them. But the hardline Maoists were still a threat. They were still entrenched in many areas of the country, notably in Shanghai, Madame Mao's base of operations. When the rehabilitated Zhou died in 1976, an article appeared in a Shanghai newspaper accusing him of having been a capitalist-roader. The piece was widely interpreted as an attack on Deng. In late March, which is the time Chinese traditionally honor their dead ancestors, the Chinese people responded to the attacks by laying wreaths on public monuments honoring Zhou: 30 wreathes were hung in Tiananmen Square, and hundreds of thousands of demonstrators poured into the square.

After 5 days, during which the government was paralyzed by internal conflict, the police confronted the demonstrators; as many as 100 were killed, and thousands arrested. Deng had reportedly been placed under house arrest even before the crackdown, and after the demonstrators were quashed, he was once again purged from the leadership, relieved of all his positions in the party and the government, and sent into internal exile.

The bitter legacy of the Cultural Revolution was still fresh in Deng's mind, more than twenty years later, as the universities erupted once more.

But not for long. Mao's death, and the downfall of the Gang of Four at the hands of the army, soon returned Deng to power. Although he led China into a new era of modernization and economic development, with an annual growth rate of nearly 10 percent, the bitter legacy of the Cultural Revolution was still fresh in Deng's mind, more than 20 years later, as the universities erupted once more.

The man who had faced down Madame Mao and her fanatic Red Guards, and even replaced Mao, was not about to turn the country over to this latest bunch of self-proclaimed student revolutionaries. Contrary to the myth of Red China as a monolithic political entity whose subjects march in lockstep with an all-powerful Communist regime, the history of the country since the sixties had been one of uninterrupted political turmoil.

Deng, determined to build a prosperous China out of the ashes of Maoism, put a stop to it; when the students once again filled Tiananmen Square, carrying portraits of Mao, and calling for the overthrow of the government, he was equally determined that it would not happen again. In the context of Chinese politics and history since the sixties, the Tiananmen Square insurrection of '89 was a leftist, implicitly anti-capitalist reaction to Deng's program of economic reform, albeit one aided and abetted by radical reformists in the Communist Party itself.

In terms of sheer scope and mendacity, the propaganda campaign unleashed in this country against China rivals anything cooked up by Madame Mao. While the Tiananmen Square incident is emblematic of the grotesque fiction concocted by the China-bashers, there is also the "Military Threat."

The assertion that China represents a military threat to the United States is proof that no idea is so obviously erroneous that some alleged expert somewhere has not endorsed it. Unlike the U.S., China is cutting back on its "defense" spending: Chinese military expenditures were reduced by 25 percent during the mid-eighties, and since then the increases have fallen below the inflation rate. The three-million-man

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People's Liberation Army is half conscripts, equipped with hopelessly outdated weaponry, and burdened by mind-boggling logistics problems.

The hypocrisy and insincerity of the Republican warmongers in Congress who rail about Chinese nuclear missiles supposedly aimed at American cities, was underscored by their response to the most substantial achievement of the Sino-American summit: the agreement by both parties to de-target their nukes. Everybody knows that they can be re-targeted in a matter of minutes, was the Republicans' reply. But if that is so, then no agreement is worth anything–and we should go to war and be done with it. By this mad logic, a nuclear first strike against Beijing is justified on the grounds that it would eliminate long-range missiles that could, at any moment, be re-targeted at American cities.

Republicans accuse Clinton of selling militarily-sensitive satellite technology to the Chinese government in exchange for a few hundred thousand dollars in campaign contributions. The irony is that the real use of this technology is to launch communications satellites, such as AsiaSat, which allows the growing number of Chinese satellite dishes aimed in its direction to bypass the state-controlled media and tune in to the worldwide buzz. In the name of anti-Communism, these new Cold Warriors are willing to throw away the most powerful weapon in the anti-Communist arsenal.

Then there is the religious angle. Pat Robertson has descried the anti-China lobby gathering force among religious conservatives as "morally irresponsible and politically ignorant." "Few things bring people together like a common enemy," he writes. "To some, China has done a masterful job of playing the villain. The China bashers prosper in direct mail and media campaigns, but they do not have the weight of righteousness on their side." [*Wall Street Journal*, June 30, 1998]

William McGurn, editor of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, and for many years associated with *National Review*, said it best: While not arguing that Beijing has established freedom of religion, he says that "when American critics declare that things are getting worse, it prompts the great unasked question: Compared with what?" The "criticism now leveled by American Christian activists seems less a snapshot of China in the late 1990s than a caricature drawn from the high days of Maoism a generation ago." Christian churches were closed during the Cultural Revolution: Bibles were forbidden, all religious proselytizing was banned, and believers were often imprisoned, tortured, and killed.

This triple alliance of neocons, big labor, and right-wing economic nationalists poses a threat to the peace of the world and the future of liberty.

Today, government-sanctioned "patriotic" churches, including Catholics and various Protestant denominations, function openly: Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network has aired its programs over state-run television. While there has been some resistance on the part of local Party officials to the cultural implications of China's opening up to the West, these are isolated incidents that go against the national trend.

Confined to the neoconservatives and their dupes on the right, the campaign to make an enemy out of China would be obnoxious without being really dangerous. Unfortunately, the China-bashers have built a broad coalition that encompasses most of the left. The labor unions fear Chinese imports more than the imagined threat of intercontinental missiles, and ceaselessly demand trade barriers against Chinese goods. Joining the AFL-CIO in this protectionist crusade is the former non-interventionist Pat Buchanan, whose jeremiads at China become more warlike by the week.

This triple alliance of neocons, big labor, and right-wing economic nationalists poses a threat to the peace of the world and the future of liberty. For the defection of Buchanan and his followers from the ranks of the "isolationists," and their working alliance with the globalists at the *Weekly Standard*, is a blow to the post-Cold War resurrection of the Old Right (or, perhaps, a reminder that nothing good can come out of the Beltway). Here is a reconfirmation–if any were needed–of the logical link between protectionism and war, and the old dictum that if goods do not cross borders then armies soon will.

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China's long march toward capitalism and freedom is in danger of stalling: "capitalist-roaders" like Deng and his successors have had to face not only domestic enemies who long to restore Maoism, but enemies abroad intent on putting obstacles in their path. A new Cold War, with China cast in the Soviet role, would put China, as well as much of the world, on an altogether different road. RRR

IN SEARCH OF THE RACIALIST RIGHT

PAUL GOTTFRIED

For some years now Jared Taylor and his monthly publication *American Renaissance* have been subjected to heated attacks by the liberal-neocon press. The accusation of "Nazi associations" made this May by Jack Newfield, a syndicated *New York Post* columnist, epitomizes the invective. Says Taylor: the only crime committed is "speaking honestly about race issues."

Three of the contributors to Taylor's publication and annual conferences, Michael Levin, Rabbi Meyer Schiller, and Sam Francis, have suffered professional damage for their associational indiscretion: Francis seeing his appearance at an *AR* conference thrown up to him when the *Washington Times* was sacking him; Levin having his associations with *AR* cited as a justification for his continued professional isolation at the City University of New York; and Rabbi Schiller having been solemnly warned by the Yeshiva University administration to desist from further shaming of their institution.

For me, it is impossible to think of what Taylor and his friends might have said as vicious or Nazi-like. In fact, it is hard for me to imagine anything they are saying that would not have been publicly discussed in the U.S., without the slightest shame, before the seventies. Not everyone would have agreed with their bleak assessment of racial relations or with their fatalistic view of black intellectual limitations. Nonetheless, the views expressed in *AR* would not have elicited the same name-calling they do now.

Moreover, it is certainly possible to find up until the last three decades more politically incorrect statements on race relations than those written by Taylor. One need only consult the back issues of *National Review*, particularly the contributions by William Buckley dealing with the dangers of surrendering political power to "culturally inferior" blacks and the numerous remarks by Ernest van den Haag on black intellectual inferiority. One may assume that if these intellectuals have changed their opinions, they have not done so for scientific reasons.

The problem is the general political culture, which forbids noting the obvious in the case of designated victims. Thus it is not permissible to note the higher degree of violence in almost all black societies than in white and Asian ones. The same thought control has been imposed on other awkward observations, e.g.,

Absent affirmative action and other forms of administrative bullying, there would not be the significant black professional and academic advancement now taking place.

that absent affirmative action and other forms of administrative bullying, there would not be the significant black professional and academic advancement now taking place, or that sub-Saharan cultural and intellectual achievements have been puny when measured against Western or Oriental standards.

Murray N. Rothbard (1926–1995)—dean of the Austrian School of economics, historian of freedom, philosopher of libertarianism, and enemy of the state—was a one-man army of liberty. The *Rothbard–Rockwell Report*, which he cofounded, is inspired by his spirit, and dedicated to his vision.

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While one may disagree about the causes of these situations, simply noting certain realities has become tantamount to professional and social suicide. "Conservatives" and "liberals" work earnestly to dance around them, parroting happily the same tired explanations: e.g., the burden of oppression, Southern bigotry, and insufficient opportunities for racial intermarriage. And despite some shadowboxing about quotas and the "true" legacy of Martin Luther King, the two respectable sides enthusiastically agree about the need for government planning to eliminate racial inequalities. Whence the consensus on tough anti-discrimination laws affecting business and banking practices, and the unfailing openness to "social policies" to "heal" racial tensions. Such attitudes and opinions cut across the fictional ideological divide.

The opinions we are not to hear remain taboo because their representatives are defiantly opposed to government planning. In *The Real American Dilemma*, an anthology of papers presented at the 1998 *AR* conference, almost all the contributors express disgust with an overreaching administrative state and its lurid interest in race relations. Though Levin maintains that the cognitive and behavioral differences between the races are genetically based and therefore, for the most part, irremovable, he nonetheless does not ask the government to frame new policies. He pleads with the state to dismantle all social engineering projects. The contribution by Francis dwells on the persecution of scholars J. Philippe Rushton, Roger Pearson, and Michael Levin, who have dared to dispute racial egalitarian platitudes.

Most chilling is the treatment accorded to Rushton by Western Ontario University and by the socialist government of the province, following a controversial paper on racial matters delivered at a scientific convention in January 1989. Rushton was bullied to resign his post, and the Mayor of London (Ontario) and the Premier and Attorney General of Ontario investigated him for violating the Race Relations Act. This piece of legislation makes it a criminal offense, with a prison sentence of up to two years, to "willfully promote hatred against any identifiable group." Needless to say, white Christians have not benefited (nor were they intended to do so) from this act.

Michael Levin pleads with the state to dismantle all social engineering projects.

The other contributors to the anthology are equally allergic to sensitizing government. Behavioral geneticist Glayde Whitney believes that political wars against sociobiological research will accelerate in the future. Immigration specialist Wayne Lutton maintains that the federal government's immigration police thwart the popular will by imposing on the rest of us millions of culturally alien Third Worlders who will likely swell over time the ranks of the American welfariate.

The contributions by Taylor and outspoken Orthodox priest James Thornton announce that there is nothing wrong with blacks and whites preferring their own kind. They will in all likelihood continue to do so, unless government pressure is brought to bear, which neither contributor hopes to see happen. Nonetheless, Thornton gives a theological twist to Taylor's empirically based conclusion by looking for a divine design behind a racially differentiated humanity. Contrary to the charge made against the conference participants, none of them advocates the forced segregation of the races.

The only separatist argument presented comes from Michael Hart, a Princeton PhD in astronomy and a former NASA research scientist, now predictably reduced to lecturing at a junior college. In rather tentative remarks, Hart suggests that given the profound cultural and social differences between the races, and given abundant evidence of a growing black dislike for whites, it might be reasonable to have the two races live separately. Hart underscores the voluntary nature of the partition proposed and suggests a biracial alternative to the two separatist societies and polities which he recommends.

This plan seems unworkable for at least three reasons: the already complicated pattern of interracial settlement in the same geographic areas, the ongoing dependence of blacks on a predominantly white economy and welfare state, and, most importantly the obsession of white political and social elites with expiating their guilt toward minorities, however much they may remove themselves from said minorities in their choices of residences.

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Ironically, Hart's piece resurrects the old radical-left plan for a "black belt," which would be established in the deep South and in which Negroes would have political control and cultural autonomy. Hart offers a modern equivalent of this idea but bends backward to respect the feelings of integrationists who would be "horrified at the prospect of living in a white separatist state." He emphasizes the point that a separatist solution may be necessary for those blacks and whites who do not want to live together, and this is primarily because blacks find white society, outside of its material value, to be alien and disagreeable.

Most striking about Hart's proposal is what it indicates about our own intellectually repressive society. "Racial Partition in the United States" might easily have come from a Communist of the thirties or a New Leftist of the sixties. Today it is considered the work of a right-wing hate criminal.

Cut off from the respectable and now indistinguishable right and left, Hart and his friends are guilty of screaming "enough already" at the endless government plans to "bring the races together." RRR

THE REAL MONOPOLIST

LLEWELLYN H. ROCKWELL, JR.

The Clinton administration's new strategy for business regulation is simple enough. It looks for a large, successful, innovative company, and threatens to smash it to smithereens. The excuse is a theoretical hangover from the Progressive Era: the company has a monopoly.

Once you get the hang of it, it's easy to spot them. Every super-successful company qualifies because it offers a unique product and has outwitted its competitors (who are all-too-willing to cheer on the trustbusters). Officially , the theory posits several marks of a monopolistic company. It restricts output. It raises prices. It rests on its technological laurels and stops innovating. It has huge profit margins.

Microsoft and Intel, the companies named in the Clinton administration's war on success, does the opposite. They constantly innovate to maintain and increase market share. Prices fall daily. Distribution doubles by the month. In fact, that's what the government accuses them of: unfairly striving for excellence to be successful.

Monopoly hasn't always been defined as extraordinary market success. The classical definition (still the second definition in today's dictionary) grew out of the English mercantilist experience from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. It refers to a grant of government privilege to a particular person or group to be exclusive distributor of a good or service. The granting of monopolies began with textiles but eventually extended to soap, starch, iron, leather, books, wine, and even fruit.

Murray Rothbard was the first economist to fully debunk the modern definition in favor of the older one. It turns out, according to his research, that there is no way, so long as there is a free market, to distinguish a monopolistic from a competitive company. Or as Mises had foreseen, the problem of monopoly is a problem of government, not markets.

Applying this correct definition in modern America, clearly the biggest monopolist of all is the U.S. government. In a range of its goods and services, we find all the classic signs of monopoly power. No competition is allowed, the quality of output is continually falling, the prices are continually rising, and the consumer is treated shabbily. Let's consider a few examples.

The Postal Service. The government allows only one gang, organized into a powerful union, to haul and deliver letters from one spot to another at a profit. Prices charged depend on an act of Congress and the consumer of the service has no say in how it is provided.

Mises said the problem of monopoly is a problem of government, not markets.

A few ingenious companies have worked their way around the law to deliver packages and urgent correspondence. And faxes and emails have liberated many people from the monopoly's shackles, but the exclusive and anachronistic privilege still persists. The result is what you would expect: rising costs, restricted supply, falling quality, and technological backwardness.

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If the rotten Congress wanted to actually do some good for the country with a small policy shift, it would strip the Postal Service of its privileged rights. There is not a soul alive who thinks their privileges are actually necessary for mail delivery. It hangs on only by its political clout. And there's another factor. The government wants to maintain its control in case it needs to inspect our private mail. Down with rotten, aging, antique and potentially evil postal service.

The Federal Highways. If you want to travel some distance by car, there are no real options. You must drive on a road owned, financed, and maintained by the feds. They decide where the roads are going to be, and not based on what's best for the consumer. Politics, not efficiency, determines that. No private competition is tolerated, so private road entrepreneurs need not apply.

The price, paid in taxes, goes ever higher, as the multi-hundred billion dollar highway bill now blowing through Congress demonstrates. But what can the average payer do about it? The people with the influence are the ones getting the contracts. The lion's share of spending doesn't actually go to maintenance and repairs; it lines insiders' pockets. If a private company had cost overruns and delays like the government highway program, it would be out of business.

The federal highway system came about (ostensibly) because Eisenhower wanted to move nukes around the country so foreign bad guys couldn't bomb them. But the highways also help in insuring the ability to move troops around to quell domestic insurrection (consistent with the ancient tradition). There can be no states rights so long as the feds have the whole country united in roads they control.

They could be privatized, but that wonky plan would probably collapse into some racket by which a munitions manufacturer would be contracted to run them. The best solution, then, is to give the roads to the states, who will then decide they are too expensive to maintain, and then turn around and sell them.

The proper answer to the education monopoly is the same as the solution to highways. They should be decentralized and returned to local control.

Education. For generations, the federal government has been stepping up its ability to monitor and license educational services at every level of society. Some of the means have been explicit, like establishing a Department of Education and directly regulating curricula. Others have been more subtle, like offering bribes in the form of subsidies to universities to conform to government dictate, and student scholarships and loans.

Step by step, the government is gaining an effective monopoly over educational services. The result is once again predictable. Costs have skyrocketed, quality has plummeted, and the consumer has suffered. Meanwhile, independent alternatives are few and far between, and educational entrepreneurs face huge and growing barriers to entry.

Private schools and home schools have worked to correct for the failure of public schools, and the movement is booming. But without a united educational system, statists ask, how can we maintain a united national culture dominated by government power and continue socializing kids into the political agenda of the left (which is the whole point of public schools)? The neocons dreamed up an answer: nationalize private schools in the name of choice (vouchers) by forcing them all onto the government payroll.

The proper answer to the education monopoly is the same as the solution to highways. They should be decentralized and returned to local control, pre-1954 style.

The FDA. If you want to buy or sell a medicinal drug on the market, you must first appeal to this government agency to give you the okay. Regulators claim they are just checking for safety and effectiveness, but in fact, the agency drags its feet for years on treatments that could save people's lives. Manufacturers with a special relationship with the FDA have the inside track, while young upstarts must wait years in line.

The results: product innovation in this industry is far behind scientific development, prices of drugs and treatments far exceed inflation,

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and consumers must get permission from the governmentally privileged medical profession to heal themselves.

Fortunately for us, alternative therapies and medicines are still legal. And thanks to the consumer-driven demand for home-remedy books, we are less dependent on the medical profession and its government-approved drugs than ever. Even so, thanks to the FDA, many people have to travel to foreign countries just to get treatment. And if the government and the establishment drug companies had their way, we wouldn't be allowed to take vitamin C without a prescription.

The Courts. The government controls them all, and with little attention to the consumer. All parties can be kept waiting months and years for justice. Court services are ostensibly "free," but long lines and low quality incur expenses of their own. And if justice is not meted out, you have no choice. You must accept the government's judgment, no matter what. If the murderer of a family member goes free, you are just supposed to accept it. Vigilantism is considered evil because it threatens the government monopoly.

A federal judge is a dictator, unlike a software mogul. Instead of serving the consumer, "His Honor" makes him bow and scrape. Alternatives have developed in the form of private arbitration, and thank goodness. Business uses such services wherever possible. But in the end, the law is defined by the government's judicial elite, who tolerate no competition.

Let's say, because you can read, you like the real Constitution better than the made-up version the courts enforce. Too bad. The precedents cited by the court win the day. Let's say you you notice that there is no constitutional basis for the EPA invading your land and telling you not to develop it. You do it anyway. If you claim your behavior is consistent with the Constitution if not with the unconstitutional laws the government enforces, you'll be bankrupted or locked up in a loony bin.

Since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. diplomatic establishment has deluded itself into thinking that it alone holds the world together.

The Dollar. If you want to use money for domestic purposes, there is only one option. You must use a paper ticket whose value and supply is controlled by a central authority staffed by bankers handpicked by politicians. The ticket is so obviously a government monopoly that its design always features a politician, particularly one who excelled at expanding the power of government (e.g., Lincoln, Roosevelt, Jackson), with pictures of their ugly buildings on the back.

All the telltale signs of monopoly are present. The quality of the dollar has fallen precipitously since the central bank was founded in 1914, with the purchasing power slipping to 5 percent of its pre-Fed value. The victims have been savers, who have scrambled to stay ahead of the inflation game, whereas debtors (primarily government) have enjoyed watching as everyone else pays the price for profligacy.

The only winners in the dollar monopoly have been the exploiters. But try to invent an alternative–like gold–and you'll be lucky to avoid prison. Invent an alternative paper currency, like the Montana Freemen did, and you'll be declared a counterfeiter and prosecuted. Private "fraud" is illegal but public fraud is the Fed's bread and butter.

Defense. The government claims it defends us, but on even this most basic function it can't control the border against invasion of hostiles who want to go on welfare and lobby for more ethnic privileges. This is violence exercised through politics. If all land were owned privately, such invasions would be dealt with the same way we keep squatters off our front lawns.

As for a military invasion, who believes the U.S. could actually combat it? The government's too busy in Bosnia, the Middle East, Korea, or goodness knows where else. Meanwhile, the monopolist is constantly trying to disarm the population, taking from our families our only means to prevent invasion.

And talk about monopoly pricing. Taxpayers pay for the largest military in the world despite there being no real threat to Americans other than the government itself. But the monopolist is constantly searching for a plausible enemy so

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its monopoly can thereby be justified. China, Iraq, Libya, Cuba, North Korea, India, and fill-in-the-blank, all are potential Enemies on a revolving basis.

The World. Since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. diplomatic establishment has deluded itself into thinking that it alone holds the world together. It follows that no country, anywhere in the world, is allowed to make fundamental decisions about its destiny without U.S. permission. That is why the establishment went bonkers when India and Pakistan tested nukes. The nukes represented a threat to the U.S. desire for total global domination.

The Birchers were right to warn about the nightmare of world government, from which there would be no escape. This entity would hold the final monopoly on the exercise of power and there would be no liberty for anyone and no self determination for any group. Who would have imagined that after the Soviet Union disappeared, we would meet the world government, and it would be in D.C.?

The classical liberals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries fought real monopolies like these tooth and nail. Our job is the same. We must defend any company the U.S. government labels a monopoly, which only means that it represents a threat to the power of the state (which Intel and Microsoft certainly do). And we must fight the real monopolist, the real enemy, which exploits us, steals half our income, wrecks our prosperity, feeds war fever the world over, and which will collapse once the racket becomes widely enough known. RRR

PUFFED UP

L.H.R., Jr.

Government has long taxed, regulated, and generally denounced the use of tobacco. Now Congress and the White House are going in for the kill, with a half-trillion dollars in taxes and fines on cigarettes. For good measure, they threw in an extra $5.2 billion to subsidize more lawsuits.

Meanwhile, smoking and chewing are increasingly popular among teenagers, with half of white males now regularly consuming tobacco. Might there be a connection between these trends? Certainly government always seems to heighten the very trends it is supposedly combating.

It was this way with alcohol prohibition, so why should we expect something different with tobacco? A free people does not follow the dictates of politicians on morality, health, or anything else.

Consider the new study from the Centers for Disease Control, which finds that teenage tobacco use has gone through the roof. Among teen girls, 36 percent smoke, and of all groups, 43 percent imbibe.

Tobacco use among young black males in 1991 was down to 14 percent, a fact heralded as proof that the war on tobacco was working. Now, it turns out, that figure has doubled to 28 percent, despite or even because of the war. Among black females, rates have risen by 54 percent since 1991. These trends have far from peaked. One in five high-school kids smoked a cigar in the last month.

So how does Washington respond to the news that its campaign against teen smoking is a bust? Not by throwing in the towel. In rallies against the devil nicotine led by the likes of Al Gore and Donna Shalala, these data are cited as the very basis for stepping up the attack. Nothing shakes D.C.'s faith that we are the problem, and they are the solution.

This is how government grows. It declares a non-problem to be a social crisis, and then enacts laws against it. When the policy backfires, officials declare that the problem calls for even greater efforts. This is how we got the modern welfare state, the civil-rights apparatus, and environmental regulation, for example.

These are not good intentions gone wrong. The rationales government uses to control economic life are just excuses for what it really wants: power and money. In the case of tobacco, the political class cannot be more brazen. It demonizes tobacco in order to tax it and get more mad money.

This is how government grows. It declares a non-problem to be a social crisis, and then enacts laws against it

Thus, the sermonizing about the health and welfare of teens is sheer gloss. Teens are also harmed, and far more fundamentally, by the federalization of education, the regulation of labor markets, the subsidization

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of family breakup, and the social security tax, not to speak of war and militarization–all gruesome forms of intervention that few politicians lift even a finger to correct.

Both political parties claim that the price increases brought about by new taxes will discourage smoking. But how can they know? Their kept economists claim to measure past "demand elasticities"–estimates based on past price changes–and extrapolate those into the future. But past elasticities give little if any hint about future behavior.

Given rising demand–both in the quantity smoked and the number of consumers–and the growing allure of tobacco, government-engineered price increases are unlikely to reduce consumption. They will only create new incentives to buy cigarettes in gray and black markets.

Let's face it: Teens aren't known for their tendency to obey authority, not parental, much less governmental. In any case, if teen smoking is a problem, that's for families, churches, and neighborhoods to determine and control. In a country founded on rebellion against government, regulatory intervention only increases the sense that smoking is a forbidden fruit.

The tobacco tax enthusiasts portray smoking as a dirty, anti-social, and unhealthy habit. But all the propaganda in the world can't suppress the fact that smoking is perceived as cool. Indeed, smoking nearly defines the word cool, which is why the heroes in more and more movies are smokers. Smoking has always been a symbol of freedom–and now more than ever.

This brings us to the most preposterous idea in the legislation against smoking. It calls for fining tobacco companies billions of dollars if teen smoking rates do not fall. This puts companies in the position of trying to reduce consumption of the product they are in business to sell, and holds them liable if they do not.

The wholesale looting of a great industry, by a bipartisan coalition of ravenous pols, is a disgraceful chapter in the history of a country founded on free enterprise. RRR

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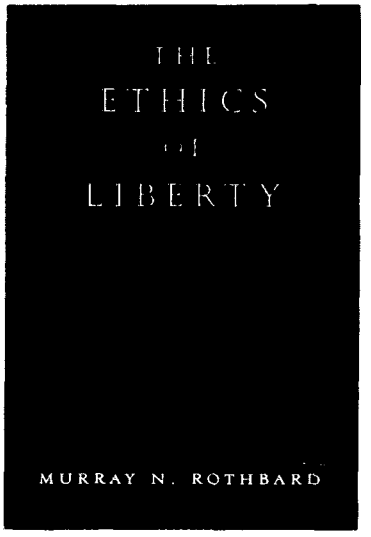

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